

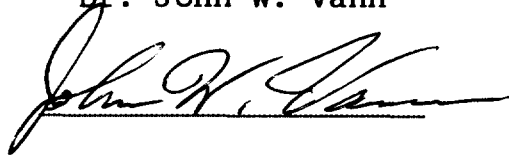
The Effects of Training on Employee Job Satisfaction

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Vann", is written over a horizontal line.

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## BACKGROUND

Thousands of studies have been completed on various components affecting worker job satisfaction. These studies have analyzed the effects of occupational stresses and job satisfaction (Burke 1976), and how role ambiguity and role conflict affect job satisfaction (Abdel-Halim 1978; Keller 1975; Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman 1970). Among others, studies have also been completed on how gender differences affect job satisfaction (Mottaz 1986) and the effects of race on job satisfaction (Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley 1990). There is research completed on how trainee attitudes influence training effectiveness (Noe and Schmitt 1986). However, while researching the various factors influencing worker job satisfaction, no information was discovered concerning the effects of training on job satisfaction.

The present study is designed to analyze the effects of training on job satisfaction, but a review of other variables is necessary to better understand the effect training has on a change of employee overall job satisfaction. Besides training, this study continues the analysis of role ambiguity and role conflict on satisfaction; the effects of age on job satisfaction, role conflict, and role ambiguity; and the effects of job tenure on satisfaction, conflict and ambiguity.

First, volumes of research have been conducted on the effects of role ambiguity and conflict on job satisfaction and there are many views on the subject of how these variables affect

satisfaction. Role ambiguity is defined as a condition in which the information available to a given organizational position is inadequate or vague and role conflict is defined as the perception of incompatible or incongruent demands placed on role incumbent (Abdel-Halim 1978). Role theory states that role ambiguity and role conflict will increase the probability that the worker will be "dissatisfied with his role, will experience anxiety, and will, thus, perform less effectively" (Rizzo, House and Lirtzman 1970). Except for Ronald J. Burke's 1976 article, "Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction," and Hall and Lawler's 1971 article "Job Pressures and Research Performance," all other materials studied supported the role model theory. Burke found that there are a few aspects of role stressors (role ambiguity and role conflict) which increase job satisfaction with values significantly different from zero at the .05 confidence level in a two-tailed test. Furthermore, research has indicated that role ambiguity is significantly more negatively related to job satisfaction than is role conflict as role ambiguity correlates at -0.37 at  $p < .001$  and role conflict correlates at -0.33 at  $p < .001$  (Abdel-Halim 1978; House and Rizzo 1972). There has also been research to indicate that there is a greater correlation between role conflict and job satisfaction than role ambiguity and satisfaction (Tosi 1971).

Second, a meta-analysis showed age to be strongly negatively correlated with employee turnover ( $p < 0.0005$ ) (Cotton and Tuttle 1986). As Cotton and Tuttle also find overall job satisfaction

to be strongly negatively correlated with turnover at  $p < 0.0005$ , it is inferred by the principle of transitivity that age is also related to overall job satisfaction. To support this, research by Martin and Shehan (1989) has shown age to be statistically significant to job satisfaction at  $p < 0.001$ . In addition, Janson and Martin (1982) found that satisfaction increases with age until fifty and sixty years and then there is a decline in satisfaction. After sixty, though, satisfaction increases. The workers studied in the sample should prove to be highly diversified in age and should provide support for the theory that overall job satisfaction increases as the worker increases with age with a decline between fifty and sixty years. Also, role conflict and ambiguity, according to research should decline with age.

Lastly, job tenure will be analyzed as a possible positive correlate of job satisfaction among workers and a possible negative correlate of role conflict and ambiguity. Cotton and Tuttle (1986) reported that tenure was also significantly related to turnover at the  $p < 0.0005$  confidence level, thus, it is inferred that there is a relation between job satisfaction and tenure.

## METHOD

### Distribution of Questionnaire

To collect primary data, a questionnaire was sent to the employees of one hundred and five State Farm Insurance Agents operating in Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and Evansville Indiana. A systematic sampling of agencies was collected from each of these territories to be included in the study. To aid in the validation in distributing the questionnaire, instructions were given as to who should receive it. When there was one employee, only one questionnaire was administered. If there were two employees, both completed the questionnaire and returned them. When there were more than two employees in the agency, the agent was to follow distribution directions designed to ensure a representative sample of the employees. Fifteen combinations of distribution directions were designed and a set of directions was placed in each instruction letter to aid the agent with distribution and ensure higher validity of the answers. The sampling combinations are represented in Table 6. To ensure the confidentiality of the subject, the subject was instructed to not place his/her name on the questionnaire, and once finished with the questionnaire, to return it in a postage paid return envelope addressed to the researcher. Also designed to increase the return rate, a letter of authorization was written by the State Farm Insurance Cos. Vice-President of Agencies - Indiana Region - allowing the use of State Farm agents' employees in the state of Indiana for the study, and asking for the agents' cooperation in

the distribution of the questionnaire to his/her employees.

### The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is composed largely of questions from various satisfaction, role ambiguity and role conflict questionnaires previously validated.

Overall Job Satisfaction. First, the overall job satisfaction is a composite of responses to five items (Martin and Shehan 1989). The five items are:

1. how satisfied the worker is at the present.
2. whether or not the worker intends to look for another job in the near future.
3. whether the worker would recommend her or his job.
4. whether the worker would take the same job again or look for another.
5. whether the job measures up to the worker's initial expectations.

These items were answered on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied). The sum of these five items was averaged to derive an overall job satisfaction measurement, thus, eliminating the shortcomings of relying on a single question to test a broad subject.

Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity. Analysis of role conflict and role ambiguity was tested through a series of questions that related to the two variables (Abdel-Halim 1978). The answers to both the role conflict and role ambiguity questions were based on a Likert scale format where one equals very false and five equals very true. In the present study, the lower the mean for role conflict, the less conflict the individual encounters; the higher the mean for role ambiguity, the lower the role ambiguity the

respondent feels. The answers to the role conflict questions were summed and the mean was the mean role conflict the respondent encountered. The same process was followed for the role ambiguity questions.

Training. Several different types of training materials are provided to State Farm agents by corporate headquarters. Several of these training opportunities were listed and the respondents were instructed to check those training materials or courses that have been completed or attended. These materials are grouped into four categories:

1. Classes dealing with specific product knowledge.
2. Training seminars conducted by the regional office.
3. Training manuals on a broad range of subjects that the employees may study.
4. Classes designed to inform the employee how to work with the State Farm computer system.

These training groups are the independent variables in most of the analyses completed and are the basis for the study.

Demographic Information. Gender, age and tenure (years of employment at the present agency recorded in categories) were recorded for use in further testing. The age of the respondent will be measured in groups of years (<20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, etc.) to be analyzed for its effects on job satisfaction, role ambiguity, and role conflict. Age and Tenure were used extensively for research purposes, but as there was only one male respondent, the results for the gender category were dismissed. Both age and tenure were recorded categorically in order to facilitate analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Role Ambiguity

Overall Job Satisfaction. To aid in the final decision as to whether role ambiguity or role conflict has the stronger correlation with job satisfaction, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was run and is displayed in Table 4. Between role ambiguity and overall job satisfaction, there is a correlation coefficient of 0.29 at  $P < .01$ . Thus, since the correlation coefficient is positive and significant, it can be concluded that role ambiguity does not negatively affect a workers overall job satisfaction. This appears to contradict previous research as role theory states that role ambiguity negatively correlates with overall job satisfaction.

Training. Table 2 displays a series of one tailed t-tests completed on the individual components of the training program and role ambiguity. The only underwriting class that significantly affected the level of role ambiguity the employee encountered dealt with auto underwriting (t-test = 1.78,  $p = 0.04$ ). The second type of training that could be received, the seminar, was also significant in reducing role ambiguity (t-test = -1.95,  $p = 0.03$ ). Third, there were several materials that the employee could study which could lower ambiguity. These were (with their statistical values, t-test and p-value)

1. auto materials t-test = -2.77,  $p < 0.001$ .
2. life materials t-test = -2.78,  $p < 0.001$ .
3. marketing t-test = -3.26,  $p < 0.001$ .
4. office skills t-test = -3.69,  $p < 0.001$ .



Fourth, the materials to learn the computer system showed no significant effect on reducing role ambiguity ( $t\text{-test} = 1.28$ ,  $p = 0.89$ ).

Age/Tenure. Table 1 displays the analysis of variance results of the role ambiguity and age/tenure relationships. The results for role ambiguity and age are not significant ( $F_{5,72} = 0.85$ ,  $p = .52$ ), thus, it is concluded that age has no bearing on the amount of role ambiguity an employee feels. The same basic result is seen for role ambiguity and tenure ( $F_{4,75} = 1.86$ ,  $p = .13$ ), thus, how long an employee has been working for the agent has no bearing on how much role ambiguity they feel.

#### Role Conflict

Overall Job Satisfaction. Table 1 indicates that role conflict and overall job satisfaction were negatively correlated ( $r = -0.45$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Thus, as previous research has indicated, role conflict is more highly correlated with overall job satisfaction than is role ambiguity among non-managerial level employees. However, since the agents were not also tested, it is impossible to compare the employees' responses to the agents' to determine if the employees do feel greater role conflict than the employers feel. Thus, the negative response felt by the employee as a result of role conflict is statistically greater than the positive effect felt by the employee due to role ambiguity.

Training. Table 3 indicates the measures of role conflict before and after training and in all four groups of training, there were no materials which reduced role conflict. None of the

statistics were within the  $p < .05$  significance; however, it is interesting to note that several materials increased role conflict, but none in a significant quantity.

Age/Tenure. Again, Table 1 displays the ANOVA results for role conflict and age/tenure. The results of the tests conclude that neither age nor tenure will affect the amount of role conflict an employee will encounter while working in the office. However, as the p-value for age and conflict is lower than any of the other four, it would be safer to bet that age has the effect of lowering conflict than any of the other results.

#### Overall Job Satisfaction

The regression model designed for overall job satisfaction was statistically significant as  $F_{6,71} = 4.85$  at  $p < 0.001$  describing 23.1 percent of the variance in the responses to the composite overall job satisfaction measure.

Training. From Table 5, it is evident that only one of the four groups of training materials produces a significant effect on overall job satisfaction, the computer courses. Computer training is by far the best training method to increase employee overall job satisfaction ( $t$ -test = 3.12,  $p = 0.003$ ).

Age/Tenure. Also analyzed in Table 5 are the effects that age and tenure have on the variation in means in the overall job satisfaction measures. Age shows a very strong relationship with overall job satisfaction ( $t$ -test = 4.30,  $p < 0.000$ ). Thus, as employees age, they will become more satisfied with their job. Tenure does not display as strong a relationship as age ( $t$ -test = -0.82,  $p = 0.42$ ).

## CONCLUSION

The main relationship studied was the effects of training of overall job satisfaction among employees of State Farm Insurance Cos. agents. Surprisingly, only one method of training significantly influenced employees' level of satisfaction. However, it must be noted that the present study was only studying the effects of training on worker satisfaction and did not analyze the effects of training on worker productivity. Conforming to previous research, the age of the employee did have a significant effect on the overall job satisfaction level, thus, the older the employee, the more satisfied they will be with their job. Lastly, tenure had no significant effect on overall job satisfaction which is a surprising result as previous research has indicated that tenure has a positive correlation to overall job satisfaction.

Role ambiguity and role conflict showed much different responses to training, age, and tenure than overall job satisfaction, and were actually more responsive to training than was overall job satisfaction. Role ambiguity was responsive to at least one component of the four groups of training except for the computer training. However, role ambiguity did not show the responsiveness to age that overall job satisfaction did. Role conflict was affected by neither training, age, nor tenure.

Finally, contradicting the majority of research, the present study concludes that role conflict is more strongly correlated with overall job satisfaction than role ambiguity. Thus, it will

be much harder for an employer to rid the stressor, role conflict, than it will be for her/him to rid the problem of role ambiguity. Much of this result is displayed in the fact that role ambiguity is very responsive to training - more training lowers ambiguity - and nothing studied seemed to change the amount of role conflict the employee felt.

This study opens the door for further research on the topic of training and overall job satisfaction. The results obtained must not be interpreted to mean that training does not effect a change in performance, that topic was not covered in this study. However, preliminary results indicate that training has very little effect on overall job satisfaction.

TABLE 1

## Pearson Correlations

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>Correlation Coef.</u>	<u>P-Value</u>
Overall Satis.	Role Conflict	-0.45	P<.001
Role Conflict	Role Ambiguity	-0.35	P<.001
Overall Satis.	Role Ambiguity	0.29	P<.001
Overall Satis.	Age	0.34	P<.001
Overall Satis.	Tenure	-0.04	NS
Role Conflict	Age	-0.18	NS
Role Conflict	Tenure	0.09	NS
Role Ambiguity	Age	0.05	NS
Role Ambiguity	Tenure	0.07	NS

TABLE 2

## Analysis of Variance

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>df</u> <u>treat</u>	<u>df</u> <u>Error</u>	<u>F-Value</u>	<u>p-value</u>
Satisfaction	Age	5	72	3.64	0.01
Satisfaction	Tenure	4	75	1.23	0.31
Role Con.	Age	5	72	1.97	0.09
Role Con.	Tenure	4	75	1.15	0.34
Role Ambig.	Age	5	72	0.85	0.52
Role Ambig.	Tenure	4	75	1.86	0.13

TABLE 3

Role Ambiguity  
(One-Tail T-Test)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Means</u>		<u>One-Tailed t-value</u>	<u>p-Value</u>	<u>df</u>
	<u>No Training</u>	<u>Training</u>			
Auto	3.76	3.97	-1.78	0.04	63
Fire	3.84	3.92	-0.68	0.25	80
Health	3.85	3.93	-0.67	0.25	62
Life	3.84	3.95	-0.96	0.17	66
Seminar	3.78	4.00	-1.95	0.03	80
A/S Auto	3.69	3.98	-2.77	0.00	68
A/S Fire	3.70	4.02	2.75	1.00	68
Health	3.78	4.05	2.37	0.99	73
A/S Life	3.77	4.08	-2.78	0.00	68
Mktg.	3.74	4.10	-3.26	0.00	74
Office	3.67	4.07	-3.69	0.00	79
Computer	3.73	4.93	1.28	0.89	24

TABLE 4

Role Conflict  
(One-Tail T-Test)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Means</u>		<u>One-Tailed t-value</u>	<u>p-value</u>	<u>df</u>
	<u>No Training</u>	<u>Training</u>			
Auto	2.04	2.29	-1.26	0.89	68
Fire	2.02	2.32	-1.60	0.94	77
Health	2.08	2.33	-1.28	0.90	69
Life	2.03	2.41	-1.91	0.97	60
Seminar	2.21	2.15	0.16	0.44	78
A/S Auto	2.25	2.16	0.39	0.35	42
A/S Fire	2.20	2.18	-0.07	0.53	60
Health	2.19	2.19	0.04	0.48	79
A/S Life	2.20	2.17	0.18	0.43	73
Mktg.	2.26	2.09	0.90	0.18	75
Office	2.13	2.24	-0.60	0.72	77
Computer	2.19	2.19	-0.00	0.50	25

TABLE 5

Regression Model for Overall Job Satisfaction

<u>Predictor</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>	<u>T-Ratio</u>	<u>P-Value</u>
Classes	-0.27	-1.20	0.23
Seminar	0.10	0.53	0.60
Materials	0.28	1.18	0.24
Computer	0.70	3.12	0.00
Age	0.36	4.30	0.00
Tenure	-0.07	-0.82	0.42

R-sq(adj) = 23.1%

 $F_{6,71} = 4.85$ 

P = 0.00

TABLE 6

Sampling Method				
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES				
	3	4	5	6
COMBINATIONS	1 - 2	1 - 2	1 - 2	1 - 2
	1 - 3	1 - 3	1 - 3	1 - 3
	2 - 3	1 - 4	1 - 4	1 - 4
	1 - 2	2 - 3	1 - 5	1 - 5
	1 - 3	2 - 4	2 - 3	1 - 6
	2 - 3	3 - 4	2 - 4	2 - 3
	1 - 2	1 - 2	2 - 5	2 - 4
	1 - 3	1 - 3	3 - 4	2 - 5
	2 - 3	1 - 4	3 - 5	2 - 6
	1 - 2	2 - 3	4 - 5	3 - 4
	1 - 3	2 - 4	1 - 2	3 - 5
	2 - 3	3 - 4	1 - 3	3 - 6
	1 - 2	1 - 2	1 - 4	4 - 5
	1 - 3	1 - 3	1 - 5	4 - 6
	2 - 3	1 - 4	2 - 3	5 - 6

[Note: Employers were instructed to distribute the questionnaires by the pattern of combinations received. If he/she had one employee, then only one would receive a questionnaire. If they had two employees, both would receive a questionnaire. If the employer had three or more employees, the pattern given was to be followed where:

- 1 = Most recent hired
- 2 = Second most recent hired
- 3 = Third most recent hired
- etc.]



This questionnaire is designed to study what components of your job satisfy you and what do not.

On the basis of your and other State Farm Agents' office staffs' answers, you will be contributing to a better understanding of how employers can better satisfy their employees.

This questionnaire will not take more than ten minutes of your time.

Please complete and return the questionnaire promptly in the return, stamped envelope provided. **TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY, PLEASE DO NOT PLACE YOUR NAME ON EITHER THE RETURN ENVELOPE OR THE QUESTIONNAIRE.**

Thank you for your assistance.

Answer the questions frankly and honestly.

Please answer all questions.

For questions 1 - 4 circle the best answer.

1. If a good friend of yours told you he/she was interested in a job like yours...what would you tell him/her?
  - a. advise against
  - b. have doubts
  - c. strongly recommend
2. If you had to decide all over again to take the job you have now, what would you decide?
  - a. decide against
  - b. not sure
  - c. take same job
3. How well would you say that your job measures up to the sort of job that you wanted when you took it?
  - a. not much like it
  - b. somewhat like it
  - c. very much like it
4. If you were free to go into any type of job you wanted, what would that choice be?
  - a. other job or would retire from work
  - b. same job

For questions 5 - 11: Based upon your belief about the statement respond:

**1=very dissatisfied 2=dissatisfied 3=neither 4=satisfied  
5=very satisfied.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How satisfied would you say you are with your current job?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The way my co-workers get along with each other.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. My pay and the amount of work I do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The chances for advancement on this job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The way my boss handles her/his employees.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The competence of my boss in making decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. How satisfied are you that the training you have received is adequate for the job you are expected to do?

For questions 12 - 26: Based upon your belief about the statement respond

**1=very false 2=false 3=neither 4=true 5=very true.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I receive an assignment without the human resources to complete it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I am given enough time to do what is expected of me on my job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. It seems like I have too much work for one person to do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. On my present job, the amount of work seems to interfere with how well I can do the job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I often notice a marked increase in my work load.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I have to do things that should be done differently.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.

1=very false 2=false 3=neither 4=true 5=very true

- \_\_\_\_ 21. I am assigned unnecessary tasks.
- \_\_\_\_ 22. I feel certain about how much authority I have.
- \_\_\_\_ 23. I have clearly planned goals and objectives for my job.
- \_\_\_\_ 24. I know I have divided my time properly.
- \_\_\_\_ 25. I know exactly what is expected of me.
- \_\_\_\_ 26. Explanation is clear of what has to be done.

For question 27: Check mark the training you have received and then total the number checked. Please record the number of checks in the space provided.

27.

Classes dealing with specific product knowledge (**check those which you have attended**)

- \_\_\_\_ auto underwriting
- \_\_\_\_ fire underwriting
- \_\_\_\_ health underwriting
- \_\_\_\_ life underwriting

\_\_\_\_ Two day agents' staff training in West Lafayette (Indiana Regional Office)

Agent/Staff training material (**if you have completed any, check only those you have COMPLETED**)

- \_\_\_\_ auto
- \_\_\_\_ fire
- \_\_\_\_ health
- \_\_\_\_ life
- \_\_\_\_ marketing
- \_\_\_\_ office skills

\_\_\_\_ Echo Computer training classes

\_\_\_\_ Personal staff training sessions with agent (**if available: indicate the frequency of meetings**).

\_\_\_\_

PLEASE TOTAL THE NUMBER OF CHECK MARKS \_\_\_\_\_

You do not have to provide the following information, but it would be greatly appreciated:

Please circle the appropriate response.

Gender:    Female            Male

Age:            [20 or under]    [21 - 30]    [31 - 40]    [41 - 50]  
                  [51 - 60]  
                  [61 - 70]

How long have you been at the present job (in years)?

\_\_\_\_\_

Once again, thank you very much for your time!

# State Farm Insurance Companies

INDIANA OFFICE  
2550 NORTHWESTERN AVENUE  
WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA 47906-1394

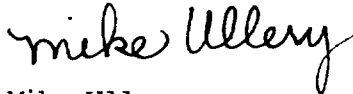
MIKE ULLERY, CLU  
DEPUTY REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT  
(317) 463-8202

March 21, 1991

To Whom It May Concern:

David Bruce, a student at Ball State University, is working on his thesis titled "Effectiveness of Training and Job Satisfaction in Small Businesses." I have authorized David to send his questionnaire to your office. It would be greatly appreciated if you would have your office staff complete his questionnaire.

This will assist him in his study at Ball State University and help fulfill his requirements in earning his degree.



Mike Ullery

MJ/skd  
20.26

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